UNITED NATIONS

GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.96/768
14 February 1991

ENGLISH
Original: ENGLISH AND FRENCH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

REPORT ON THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE PROGRAMME OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES HELD AT GENEVA ON 6 FEBRUARY 1991

GE.91-00578

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

1. The meeting of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme (EXCOM) which forms the subject of this report arose and was held for the reasons outlined in the paragraphs which follow below.

2. The Chairman of the Executive Committee, His Excellency Ambassador Emeka Ayo Azikiwe of Nigeria was, in January 1991, notified in a letter from the Permanent Mission of Argentina that the Rapporteur of the Committee, Mr. Alberto D'Alotto, would soon be leaving Geneva after completing his tour of duty at the Mission. In view of this, and in line with the applicable Rules of Procedure, a necessity existed for the Executive Committee to hold elections to fill the post of Rapporteur for the forty-first session of the Committee which would thereby become vacant.

3. The other rationale for the meeting flowed from a decision arrived at by the Committee during its forty-first session in October 1990 on mechanisms for ensuring a greater degree of flexbility for the High Commissioner in funding on-going needs, emergencies or contingencies, pending receipt of contributions or pledges. The Committee, vide paragraph 29 B of its report[1/], requested UNHCR to consult on the question with the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), and submit the relevant proposals to the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters for consideration and endorsement on behalf of EXCOM.

4. These proposals were submitted to, and considered by the Sub-Committee between November 1990 and February 1991 when the Sub-Committee endorsed various arrangements to meet the Office's requirements mentioned earlier regarding financial flexibility. One of these arrangements entails an increase in the level of the UNHCR Emergency Fund from $ 10 million to $ 20 million and the increase, also, of the amount that the High Commissioner may allocate for any one single emergency in any one year from a ceiling of $ 4 million to $ 6 million. As the increase in the level of allocations the High Commissioner could make under the Emergency Fund implied a similar increase in the 1991 General Programme budget already approved by the Committee in October 1990, a formal decision to this effect was necessary.

5. A meeting of the Committee to deal with these two questions was therefore held under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Azikiwe on 6 February 1991 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

B. Representation on the Committee

6. The following Members of the Committee were represented at the session:

Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Morocco, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire.

7. Representatives of the following States and organizations were present as observers:

Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Jordan, Ireland, Kenya, Malaysia, New Zealand, Portugal, Philippines, Poland, Rwanda, Spain, United Soviet Socialist Republics, Uruguay, Zimbabwe, Organization of African Unity (OAU), International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Commission of the European Communities (EEC).

C. Adoption of the Agenda

8. The Executive Committee adopted by consensus the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session and adoption of the provisional agenda.
2. Election of a new Rapporteur of the Executive Committee.
3. Endorsement of the decision of the recent meeting of the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters to increase the level of the Emergency Fund.
4. Closure of the session.

II. GENERAL

9. The full account of the deliberations of the Committee including the introductory remarks of the Chairman under each agenda item, is contained in the Summary Records of the meeting issued as document A/AC.96/SR.461

III. ELECTION OF THE RAPPORTEUR

10. Pursuant to its Rules of Procedure, the Committee elected Mr. Ernesto Paz (Argentina) Rapporteur by acclamation.

IV. DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

A. Decision on the UNHCR Emergency Fund

11. The Executive Committee,

Recalling resolutions 1166 (xii) of 26 November 1957, 2956 B(xxvii) of 12 December 1972, 3271 B (xxix) of 10 December 1974, and 35/41 B of 25 November 1980 of the General Assembly in connection with the Emergency Fund of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;

Taking note of resolution 45/140 B of the General Assembly in which the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner is authorized to determine in future the terms and conditions for the operation of the UNHCR Emergency Fund;

Noting the Report of the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters (document A/AC.96/767, originally considered and adopted by the Sub-Committee as contained in Conference Room Paper EC/SC.2/1991/CRP.1) especially in relation to proposed amendments to the Financial Rules of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;

(a) Authorizes the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to allocate from the Emergency Fund up to $ 20 million annually for emergency situations, it being understood that the amount made available for one single emergency shall not exceed $ 6 million in any one year and that the Fund is maintained at not less than $ 6 million, with these changes to the Financial Rules to be effective as of 1 January 1991;

(b) Approves the subsequent increase in the budgetary target for the 1991 General Programmes by $ 10 million to $ 355,555,500 (including $ 20 million for the Emergency Fund).

Notes

1. A/AC.96/760, 10 October 1990